



SAFE HOLIDAY SHOPPING



Before Shopping

- Before leaving your house, blow-out all open flame candles and turn off indoor tree lights
- Never leave your children home alone without an adult or child 13 years of age or older
- Avoid shopping alone-shop with a friend or family member
- Try to shop during daylight hours
- If you must shop at night:
 - Shop with a friend
 - Park in well-lighted space
 - Avoid carrying large amounts of cash
 - Be extra careful when carrying a wallet or purse
- Always take your purse or wallet-never leave it in your car
- Make sure any valuable items are not in plain view inside your car
- Never leave children alone in a car (It is illegal in California) or leave them at public facilities (such as arcades or playgrounds) while you are shopping



During Shopping

- Do not carry too many packages-you can lock them in your car but not in plain view or in the trunk
- Avoid carrying large amount of cash
- Use credit or bank ATM card or checks rather than carrying cash. Make sure your credit slips are kept with you and tear them up and discard them later
- Choose an ATM that is located inside a mall, store, or well-lighted location
- Wear your purse strapped across your body and wallets in front pocket
- In public restrooms-do not hang a purse on handles/hooks and never on the floor
- Always go with your child when taking them to the restroom
- Teach your child never to talk to or go anywhere with strangers
- If you place your child in a shopping cart use the safety belt-never let your child stand in the cart
- On escalators-hold the child's hand facing them forward and making sure shoes are tied



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After Shopping-Walking Home or to Your Car

- When leaving the stores, REMEMBER if it is dark or late at night or you are concerned over safety you can ask store or mall security to escort you to your car.
- When walking to your car:
 - Walk confidently with your head up and noticing surroundings
 - Walk in well-lighted and well traveled area where there are lots of people
 - Be aware of people walking in front and behind you. Scan the area around your car to make sure nobody is hiding nearby-If someone looks suspicious report them to store security and request for an escort
 - Have your car key in your hand and ready to unlock your car
- Once at your car:
 - Before opening the door and entering, look inside your car to make sure nobody is hiding
 - When loading purchases into your car place your purse in first, then children, packages, etc. and NEVER place anything on top of your car
 - Once inside your vehicle, lock your doors immediately



Once you return Home

- If you have an infant or toddler in your car, take them into your home first, then remove the gifts-It's dangerous to leave your child alone in a car-It's also the Law!*



- Keep all wrapped gifts hidden in closets or other hidden places in your home-not under your tree
- Keeping gifts out-of-sight prevents easy visibility and access in case of burglary



- Place gifts under your tree on December 24th when you know you will be home, so you can enjoy them with no risk of being stolen

Information obtained from: The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Los Angeles Police Department and The National Crime Prevention Council